CLAIMS

1. A method for producing a pneumatic tire, comprising the steps of:

- supporting both bead portions of a green tire by a pair of holders to which opposite axial ends of a bladder are tightly attached, respectively,

5   - joining the holders to each other and supplying a fluid into the bladder to preliminarily inflate the bladder within the green tire, and

- transferring the green tire into a vulcanizer, together with the holders and the preliminarily inflated bladder, and then supplying a heat medium into the bladder to thereby vulcanize the green tire and form a vulcanized tire.

10   2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the fluid to be supplied into the bladder for its preliminary inflation is a high-temperature fluid.

3. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

- transferring the vulcanized tire, together with the holders and the bladder, from the vulcanizer to a post-cure inflator, and attaching said holders

15   to a rotary shaft of said post-cure inflator; and

- rotating the rotary shaft of the post-cure inflator to thereby cool the vulcanized tire.

4. The method according to claim 3, further comprising the step of accelerating cooling of the vulcanized tire, by supplying a low-temperature

20   fluid into the bladder.

5. An apparatus for producing a pneumatic tire, comprising:

- a preprocessing machine comprised of (i) joining means for mutually joining a pair of holders supporting both bead portions of a green tire, respectively, and (ii) preliminary inflating means for supplying a fluid into a

25   bladder having opposite axial ends tightly attached to the holders, respectively, to thereby preliminarily inflate the bladder within the green tire;

- a vulcanizer for supplying a heat medium into the bladder within the green tire, to thereby vulcanize the green tire and form a vulcanized tire; and

- transfer means for transferring the green tire together with said holders

30   and the preliminarily inflated bladder, from the preprocessing machine to the vulcanizer.